

A New Generation

by o 055 o

Category: Halo

Genre: Adventure, Drama

Language: English

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2011-10-13 05:14:35

Updated: 2013-10-16 17:52:23

Packaged: 2016-04-27 01:49:58

Rating: M

Chapters: 9

Words: 15,082

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: The tale of a Spartan III as he tries to survive the Human-Covenant war.

1. Chapter One: Birth Of A New Breed

****Author's note:**** So, this is the revised version of the first chapter (I've edited some stuff...I think, anyways, this is going to take a slightly different direction than I originally thought so bear with me.)

****CHAPTER ONE: BIRTH OF A NEW BREED****

****0600 HOURS, DECEMBER 18, 2536 (MILITARY CALENDAR) \ SECTOR K-009, ABOARD UNSC HOPEFUL \ MEDICAL BAY****

Beep, beep, beep that was the only sound that could be heard throughout the room as the more than 300 teenagers laid on individual medical beds. Each single one of them had been accepted into the SPARTAN III program, directed by Colonel James Ackerson of the United Nations Space Command. Not only had they been accepted but also, they had been fortunate enough to all make it during training. It was their chance to take some revenge on the aliens that had ruthlessly taken it all away from them, family, friends, everything.

Near the entrance, a tall uniformed man could be seen, he was the one charged with training the next generation of SPARTAN soldiers, being one himself, this man was Lieutenant, Junior Grade Kurt Ambrose, once known as Kurt-051. Kurt had been preoccupied by the wellbeing of his soldiers, no, his family. He had seen them as they grew up and turn from mere kids into efficient soldiers in just six years, it seemed like yesterday he had seen them arrive to Onyx as scared little boys and girls and now they were in the same situation where he had lost most of his brothers and sisters twelve years prior.

He was pulled out of his thoughts as one of the boys shifted in his sleep, looking down at the tag besides his bed, it read "Jun-A266".

All 300 of them were currently sedated; they had to be in order to avoid any complications in the ongoing augmentation process. PROJECT CHRYSANTHEMUM; as it was called, was an improvement upon the SPARTAN II's augmentation procedures that had taken place twelve years before, current technology had advanced and with the improvements, the survival rate would go from forty four percent to a hundred percent.

Sighing, the Lieutenant lazily rubbed his temples in a futile attempt at easing his worries, he knew what type of complications could happen; deformed bodies, permanent spasm attacks among other things. He just hoped that his SPARTANS would be strong enough to withstand the chemical cocktails currently being poured into their veins. He shook his head in resignation and turned on his heel, heading towards the door, they still had two days left until the augmentation procedure was over. He stopped just before the door and looked back. "Good luck Spartans." He told them, before leaving the room, letting the medics and machines do their work in peace.

****1500 HOURS, DECEMBER 20, 2536 (MILITARY CALENDAR) \ SECTOR K-009, ABOARD UNSC HOPEFUL \ MEDICAL BAY****

Numbness, that's the only thing that Carter could feel as he slowly woke up from his weeklong slumber, he was glad that the pain was over, during seven long days he, alongside the other 299 trainees had been suffering unimaginable pain, it felt like they were breaking their bones and pouring napalm unto their veins, but now it was over. He blinked several times, waiting some moments for his vision to adjust to the lightning before slowly sitting up. He could see the rest of Alpha Company still on their beds, some were stirring, some were still in a deep sleep but they would wake up pretty soon. He continued to inspect his surroundings, spotting several medical cabinets full of medicine and tools, automated robot arms to apply any medicine or drug necessary, doctors in the far end of the room discussing something; apparently oblivious to the fact that he had woken up.

He carefully set his feet down on the floor, flinching at how cold it was before groggily standing up, he felt the numbness slowly fading away but now the stiffness of his joints was taking over, protesting about a week without major movement. He began to make his way to the doctors, clumsily falling over on his first step; the loud thump was enough to alarm the medics whom immediately ran over to where he was. "Reaction time has increased too much for you to handle at the moment." One of them said while they helped him up. "You need to rest, the procedure just got over and your body is still adapting to the changes." The second doctor told him, taking a small flashlight and pointing it at his eye. "Pupils are reacting just fine; effects seem to be happening just as expected." He commented, typing it up in a TacPad he had on the pocket of his lab coat. "Subject 259 is reacting well to the chemical solutions; further studies will be needed however." He continued to type before saving the work and returning the gadget to his pocket. "Alright, 259, you should return to your bed and wait for the rest of the subjects to wake up, once that happens, you will all be taken to the mess hall to recover energies." The doctor concluded, adjusting his glasses with one finger. Carter nodded in understanding. "Yes sir, I shall wait for my brothers and sisters then sir!" He said, carefully returning to his bed, barely avoiding falling over in the process.

**1700 HOURS, DECEMBER 20, 2536 (MILITARY CALENDAR) \ SECTOR K-009,
ABOARD UNSC HOPEFUL \ MESS HALL**

Two hours later, all of the trainees had woken up and were currently located in the mess hall eating in silence as they waited for both Lieutenant Kurt Ambrose and Chief Mendez to arrive. They apparently had something to inform them. The three hundred heads turned to the right as a click resonated through the room, truth was, that they would be the only ones with an ear powerful enough to pick that sound from over the other side of the room. Standing on the door were both Kurt and Chief Mendez, clad on their regular uniform as always, they strutted to the middle of the room, stopping once they were in front of everybody. By now the SPARTANS had left their food and had stood up, saluting both men as they entered the room. "At ease" Mendez said, dismissing their salutes before Kurt spoke. "I see that everybody made it through the augmentations without any side effect, that pleases me a lot and I have to say that I'm proud of every single one of you for that." He told the trainees, holding his hands behind his back while he spoke, while his tone may not have shown his current feelings, his emotions deep inside were of extreme joy and pride for his SPARTANS. They were ready to defend humanity and her colonies against the Covenant. "So eat and rest now, because your first mission will begin soon." He informed them, looking at Mendez for a second before speaking again. "As you may know, the Covenant is currently attacking us with pretty much everything they've got, glassing colonies, destroying our ships and killing our armies, but we also have the Insurrection to worry about." He said, looking down as he remembered his first mission with Blue Team, how they had almost been killed, if it hadn't been by his funny feeling then him and the rest of the team would have been turned into confetti. It made him shudder to know how close they had been to dying that day.

He noticed that he was drifting out of the conversation and resumed, wanting to inform his soldiers as much as possible in order for them to be prepared for anything. "It has come to our attention a recent uprising in the planet Mamore, UNSC forces have been sent but with no success so far, Command wants us to send you to see how effective your training has been." He kept explaining, keeping a stern expression on his face. He didn't like the decision to send the SPARTANS this early, they had just been augmented after all, but he didn't have a say on whether or not they went, if HIGH COMM wanted it, they'd get it. "Fortunately for us, Mamore is about a week away from here in Slipspace, so that will give you some time to get more used to your new abilities." The SPARTANS listened in silence as their commander spoke, not feeling nervous at all, sure they had just gotten out of the medical bay two hours ago, but they were more than ready for the job, that was their purpose after all, to be the best of the best.

Kurt stopped his speech and looked around, noticing the determined look on their faces, he knew that they would get the job done. "SPARTANS, ARE YOU READY?" He asked them, receiving a loud "SIR, YES SIR!" as an answer from his soldiers. "I shall see you in a few hours; I still have to have your armors unpacked among other things." He finished, looking over at Mendez and the SPARTANS before walking out of the room, leaving Chief Mendez to deal with the schedules.

**1900 HOURS, JANUARY 8, 2537 (MILITARY CALENDAR) \ ABOARD UNSC

HOPEFUL, IN SLIPSPACE \ TRAINING SECTION**

"Come on, you will have to do better than that if you want to beat me" Said Emile, while he blocked the continuous barrage of strikes coming from another trainee, Kai A019. The two teenagers were currently locked in a sparring match against each other, the rest of the trainees were either focused on exercising on another part of the room or were spectating the match. "Come on Emile, just finish him!" One of them said, getting impatient with how slow the encounter was going, ever since their augmentations, the SPARTANS had been put through what could be called an alternate reality where everything was slower than normal due to their high reaction rates given by the drugs.

Kai tried without results to break the defense of Emile, being stopped every time by a counter strike from the other teenager. "Keep trying." Emile taunted, laughing at the futile attempts from his opponent to get at him. Kai, frustrated by his lack of success in the match so far, began to strike faster, trying to find a hole in his opponent's defense, managing to land a punch to the jaw of Emile only receive an uppercut in retribution. Falling to the mat below them, he held his jaw in pain as the other teen raised his arms in victory. "I told ya' I'd win." Emile said, offering one hand to the downed SPARTAN, whom gladly took it. "Well, it was worth a try." He replied, still holding his jaw with one of his hands. Emile just laughed, shaking his head. "Ah don' be such a wuss, I didn't hit yo so hard." He commented, patting Kai on the back before walking off to where the barbells and dumbbells were located.

"He can be annoyin', eh?" Jun said from his resting place against the wall; he wasn't really the type to go into physical combat, no, he'd rather shoot his enemy's head clean off of his shoulders from a mile away with his trusty SRS99 AM. Kai simply nodded, looking at Jun in a 'you're stating the obvious' kind of way. "Yeah, he often puts himself in a high pedestal when it comes to close combat records." He grunted in annoyance as he was added to the already impressive list of victories of the CQC specialist. "Yeah, well he has a good victory record." Jun finalized, shrugging off the conversation as he walked out of the training section to head towards the armory where he could peacefully assemble his weapon. Kai just shook his head and headed to where the treadmills resided, intent on getting his focus on something else.

2. Chapter Two: First Steps

**Author's notes: **So here's the second chapter, hope you guys like it.

CHAPTER TWO: FIRST STEPS

0600 HOURS, JANUARY 20, 2537 (MILITARY CALENDAR) \ ABOARD UNSC HOPEFUL, IN ORBIT WITH MAMORE \ HANGAR BAY

Adrenaline pumped through Joseph's veins as he, along with the other two hundred and ninety nine teenagers that made up Alpha Company started to board the Pelican dropships. They would take them to the surface of Mamore to aid local UNSC forces against the insurrection taking place at that very moment. He didn't know what to think of this mission, they had been trained to protect humans, not kill them,

and yet, there he was, boarding the Pelican to do exactly just that. He didn't speak out his doubts though, they were soldiers and as such, they needed to obey their orders, that didn't stop him from gazing around the hangar bay in search for similar reactions though.

He saw similar worries mirrored in the faces of several other members, while others kept a stoic and calm expression. He couldn't allow his inner thoughts compromise the mission, no, he would need to bury them in the back of his mind and hope that they won't come back in the worst moment. With that set, he returned his gaze straight ahead and stepped forward as the SPARTAN in front of him boarded the bird, mimicking the other boy, he too climbed inside and sat at one of the numerous seats that littered the sides of the trooper bay. Once the last of the SPARTANS had gotten aboard their dropships, they were clear to go. Closing their hatches, the Pelicans took off into the cold, dark vacuum of space. "You know, I thought we would be fighting Covenants, not Insurgents." He turned his gaze towards the source of the voice, it belong to a team member of his. Roxanne-A298. She was a couple of inches smaller than him, although she made up for her lack of height with absolute ruthlessness when it came to fighting, nobody messed with her and got away with it. "We all did Roxanne." He told her, looking down at the helmet on his hands, the armor they had been given felt alien to him, he was used to just using the fatigues issued by their instructors to operate after all.

He casually stood up from his seat, holding his helmet with one hand while using the other to lean against the hatch of the Pelican to properly see out of the tiny window in the middle. He could see how the Hopeful became nothing more than a dot as they flew away from it. He had never liked space, and this was no exception, it made him feel vulnerable, knowing full well that his skills and augmentations were null in the unforgiving vacuum that surrounded them. His observation was cut short when the vehicles started to enter atmosphere, turning the trooper bay into a makeshift oven. He shook his head and returned to his sat, placing his helmet on, being copied by the rest of the crew. Mamore was not a good place to be at the moment, both UNSC and Insurrection forces had to watch out for radiation poisoning when fighting, a side effect left after an insurrectionist had detonated a nuke in the middle of the Haven Arcology, killing two million people and leaving another eight million injured, with countless more expected to contract different kinds of cancers.

So, given that situation, they were forced to wear their helmets at all times to avoid any sort of poisoning, not to mention that their SPI suits would not be able to cloak without the helmets.

"Approaching LZ, thirty seconds." The pilots said over the intercom to the three hundred SPARTANS, prompting them to get ready. They didn't need a prompt, they had been preparing for the last six years for this kind of mission, and they would succeed. "Alright, let's show these Insurgents what the UNSC can do." Kai shouted as the dropships finally touched the ground, lowering their ramps so their occupants could disembark although for the unwary it would seem as there were no passengers at all, indeed the Spartans were already working, all three hundred of them were now nothing but ghosts in the mist that covered the landing zone.

The Spartans were quick to scatter into several groups, navigating through the wrecked streets of Mato Grosso, a city ravaged by

constant fighting between the UNSC and the Freedom and Liberation Party, a terrorist cell that had been causing troubles to the local forces for quite some time now. They silently jumped over wrecked cars, ducked under fallen posts and slithered through the debris of both buildings and armored vehicles alike, all the while being quiet as the dead that littered the streets. "Attention Romeo, this is Sierra One, inbound friendly patrol at your six." Carter-259 instructed through the COMM channel, prompting Joseph, Roxanne and Kai to hug the closest wall, watching in silence as four soldiers passed by the spot they had been standing at a moment before, casually chatting about the insurrection and the UNSC. They couldn't risk detection, not even by the UNSC, they were top secret and ONI wanted them to remain like that.

"Thanks Zulu, proceeding now." Joseph replied, nodding at his teammates as they moved forward to their destination, a hotel located two clicks ahead of them; the only problem was that the place was crawling with both UNSC and Insurrection forces, so it would be a challenge to do so without detection. "Romeo Two I need you to set up a marksman position on that building." Joseph pointed at a thirty story building adjacent to them, setting a waypoint for the twentieth floor. "Roger that Romeo One, right on it." Roxanne nodded, jogging to the closest entrance which was fortunately unlocked or rather, without any physical lock left due to the vicious scavenging by either factions. "Romeo Three, guard the entrance, Two, set up the sniping spot." Joseph ordered, following Roxanne as Kai stayed behind to guard the front door.

"I wonder if we will get this mission done without killing insurgents." Roxanne thought out loud, keeping a wary eye for any possible eavesdroppers, luckily for them the building was empty. "I hope so; I don't particularly like the idea of taking another human's life." Joseph answered back, placing the MA5K he was carrying on the magnetic plate on his back now that they were sure no one else was inside the building. The pair entered one of the rooms to their side and after quick examination decided that it would serve as a good spot. Joseph didn't waste time in taking off his helmet once the suit deemed the atmosphere radiation free; leaving it on top of a table he ran a hand through his short hair, sighing. He hated using that helmet, it made him feel trapped, he had to wear it though, or else his armor would be useless.

"All I know is that I want to get off of this planet, so the sooner we get this mission done the better." They were supposed to be fighting Covenant, avenging their fallen families and friends, not dealing with rebellions, but alas that's how command worked. He allowed himself a couple of minutes without his helmet, knowing full well that it was probably the only chance he would have to do that. Once he was ready, he put it back on and tapped into the global COMM channel for all the team leaders. "Bravo, Echo, status. Over." He waited a second before listening to two voices in response. "This is Echo One, we are a hundred yards away from your position and we are waiting for an M808 to pass through so we can proceed, over." Echo One replied before cutting off the transmission, she knew that their conversation could be picked off if they were not careful. "Bravo One here, arriving to your position to establish command outpost. Inbound 40 seconds, over." Bravo One announced, cutting off the transmission a moment later too.

"Well, you heard them, set up your SRS99 and look out for any

hostiles." He ordered, leaving the room to meet with his fellow team leaders, they needed to discuss the whole operation before actually acting. Soon the two teams arrived and spread across the building covering various entrances and setting up their marksmen at the back windows to see any possible patrols. "Team Lima and Mike need to process through the east while Juliet and Kilo need to go through the west. Meanwhile Bravo, Echo, Romeo and Zulu will go through the front." Joseph and Leo-219 discussed, pointing at various locations of a holographic map they had laid out for tactical discussion. "What about the rest of the teams?" He heard Echo One, or Raevynn-116 ask, he knew she would not like his words but so much operatives would make the mission harder to perform. "The rest of the teams will stay back and shift with the rest every 24 hours." That would be the best decision as they would keep one team fresh while the other was out and so on. "We will strike come nightfall, for now we must prepare and set up defenses, we don't want to get caught off guard." He looked out of the closest window, watching as a pair of M12's engaged some rebel forces, one of them being blown up by a fragmentation grenade while the other mowed down the opposition with its M41 LAAG, yeah, it was going to be a long dayâ€¦

3. Chapter Three: Complications

****Author's notes: ****Well, the third chapter is here, nothing special to be honest, just me trying to write a semi-decent story. Hope you guys like it.

****CHAPTER THREE: COMPLICATIONS****

****2300 HOURS, DECEMBER 18, 2536 (MILITARY CALENDAR) \ERIDANUS SECTOR
\ MAMORE \ MATO GROSSO****

Nighttime had finally descended upon the city, and at last, they would be able to execute their objectives without much worry of detection. The Spartans whom by now had fully explored the building were eager to get some action going and each one of them was prepared for it. "Alright team, remember the plan, we will split into two groups of two and one of three. When we run out of time we fall back and switch with the other teams." Leo spoke, prompting all of the Spartans to form up in their respective teams before they left the building. Once the teams were made, they began to exit the building, each one taking its own different path after doing so.

While patrols had decreased, they were not entirely gone, no, now instead of moving around the forces stationed themselves at checkpoints that would make the other side unable to reach vital zones without passing through them. One in particular was heavily defended, having two M808s and at least 5 troopers surrounding said tanks. "We need to find a detour, going there would be suicide." Roxanne said, zooming in with her rifle to see what kind of weapons the troopers were carrying. "Friendlies sport MA5B standard issue rifles; one of them has an E45." She informed the group, lowering her rifle a moment afterwards. "Orders?" She asked, looking back to Joseph and Leo. "Well, we are not going through there without a fight, that's for sure." Leo said shrugging lightly as he considered the options, none of them seemed promising in the current situation.

"Wait a moment, why don't we use the city's sewer system, that way we

can navigate without any worries." Joseph suggested, noticing a nearby manhole, it would be disgusting, but it wasn't something they weren't trained to do. "Granted, there is no wreckage blocking the way." He added, approaching the closed manhole. "He pulled off the lid and jumped in without a second thought, peeking out a moment later. "You're coming or what?" He asked before returning to the hole before they could answer him. The other Spartans looked at each other, shrugged and jumped in behind him. "Ugh, disgusting, somebody ate fish the other dayâ€¦" Roxanne resisted the urge to gag as the smell of rotten food and human waste filled her nostrils, it was disgusting indeed, but it was the safest route to the insurgent base. "Quit the complaining! You're going to get us detected." Joseph hushed her, hefting his MA5K in case they were not alone inside the tunnel.

He hoped he was wrong, firing inside the tunnel would pretty much leave them deaf, but if it came to that they would need to run that risk. "Jesse, do you still have those explosives? Because we are surely going to need them." Joseph asked the Spartan designated as Bravo Two, he was the demolitions expert of the team and had pretty much all of the explosives needed to blow up the whole block or the fifty plus stories building that conveniently served as the insurrection's command center. The Spartan in question, Jesse-A380, nodded in response to the question, he was currently hefting about twenty or so kilos of explosive ordnance ranging from C-7 to C-12. The group kept walking for a good five minutes before stopping dead in their tracks, their HUDS signaled their objective was just above them. "Alright, here we are." Joseph said rather obviously, looking back at Jesse before nodding to the wall above them. "You know what to do." He instructed, taking some steps back to let the demolitions expert work on the wall in peace. "Hopefully they will be asleep and who knows, maybe we will be able to get some data if we are lucky." Kai wished, keeping his E45 close to his body, who knew what would happen once they detonated the tiny charge that Jesse was currently setting up. "Charges are up sir, they shall detonate in about twenty seconds." Jesse informed Joseph prompting them to find cover around a corner while the explosives went off, causing a shockwave the shook both the tunnel and the building above it. They needed to hurry up before the occupants realized what was going on at the ground floor. "Go!" Joseph ordered, running around the corner, jumping up the hole with his photo-reactive panels deactivated, all the smoke would make it useless to cloak after all.

The Spartan team all climbed up and were about to head to the closest door when the sound of an object dropping made them turn around, once they did, they were greeted by the sight of eight men all sitting around a poker table, cigars in their mouths while beers and rifles sat idly at the table. They were as surprised as the Spartans, not believing their own eyes. "Am I the only one seeing a bunch of kidsâ€¦holding guns, the fuck's going on?" The one who had dropped the cigar from his mouth said, rubbing his eyes before another one replied. "REPENT! THE END IS NIGH! REPEEEEEENT!" Shouting in a rather feminine voice all the while flailing his arms up in the air in panic. The Spartans looked at each other for a moment before opening fire at the rebels, the bullets ending their journey inside their torsos. "Command, this is Strike Team One, we are inside the building, over." Joseph spoke through the COMM, crouching next to one of the bodies, making sure they were completely dead, of course they were, three holes were present in each man's chest, all had hit vital zones with outstanding accuracy. "This is Command, Strike Team One,

your objective is currently located fifty stories above you, proceed immediately through the use of elevators, over." A feminine voice replied inside their helmets, setting a waypoint in the direction were the elevators were located at.

"Hostiles are out, take their weaponsâ€¦ They won't need them." He ordered, retrieving a pair of M7's, they would work well to save ammunition in case they got into a firefight. The rest did something similar and picked up MA2Bs as well as BR55 Battle Rifles, it was rather uncommon for rebels to be wielding this weapons, somebody must have given the weapons to them, or perhaps they were stolen, either way Section Three would be informed of it. After picking up any useful objects the Spartan team proceeded to the elevators, dividing their forces in two smaller groups to make things quicker. "Team One, you go right, we will go left." Leo whispered in the COMM as they stepped inside the second elevator, disappearing from sight a moment later. They would be heading to the last floor to try and secure the landing pad at the roof for a quick extraction. Team One in turn would focus on getting the data and eliminating any insurgent leadership elements present.

The six Spartans that made up Team One stepped in the first elevator and pressed the buttons that would take them to their destination, slipping into a silent atmosphere as the elevator began to ascend to the signaled floor. "I cannot believe we are actually doing this." Joseph stated more to himself than to the others, he was having his doubts about the nature of the mission, they were supposed to protect humanity not harm her, and still they were inside a building they would blow up in less than an hour for the sake of exterminating a rebellion, it was really ironic and conflicting and he didn't like it one bit. "Yeah, it's amazing that we just killed eight men downstairs, it feels strange to know I just took a human lifeâ€¦" Roxanne said, it was for her, regularly she was the tough, ruthless member of the team and yet, she agreed. Their conversation was cut off short once the elevator stopped in its tracks, a ring signaling they had arrived to the desired floor. "Well, looks like this conversation will have to be finished later." He sighed, readying both M7's as the doors opened. "Is this some form of joke?" Kai asked as an empty hallway was revealed, it wasn't just an empty hallway, and it featured no security measures like cameras or guards, just doors, a lot of them. "Do you think this may be a trap?" He listened as Ben, one of the Spartans from Team Bravo spoke, gripping his shotgun a little tighter as moments ticked by. "Perhaps, stay back just in case. Jesse, give him a couple of flashbangs." Joseph instructed, raising the M7's in his hand to aim, he didn't want to get caught off guard in such a closed space.

The team with the exclusion of Benjamin, proceeded to the main door, being wary of the ones that littered their sides, hopefully they would not be walking into a trap. Once they reached the door, they each took a side and leaned on it for all the cover possible, looking at each other for a moment before nodding and opening said door. What they found inside was not really what they expected, no. A big desk sat in the middle of the room with only an overhead light bulb illuminating the whole space. Behind the desk a tied man sat, clearly unconscious due to his posture. "Command it looks like we've got a prisoner, instruct course of action?" Joseph contacted the base, hearing some static along with the word interrogate. "This seems fishy, there's a lot of static on the COMM." He told the others before they approached the tied up figure, lowering their weapons as

they reached him. The man was a mess, all beaten up and bloody, no doubt he had been tortured

He took a hold of the man's shoulder and shook him a bit, prompting him out of unconsciousness. "Wake up, what happened here?" His question was met with a short response. "Inniesâ€¦.unit killedâ€¦bomâ€¦." He stopped, his head dropping to the side as he died, probably due to some internal injury. "Dammit he is dead! Now we won't know where the rebel leaders are!" Roxanne exclaimed, kicking at the desk. Joseph however stopped her, his ears picking up a soft noise emanating from somewhere in the room. Click. Click. Click. "Do you hear that?" He asked, moving his head in the direction of the sound. It seemed to be coming from the man's torso. Clickâ€¦Clickâ€¦Click. He ripped open the soldier's BDU, only to find an explosive pack strapped to his chest. "M383C!" That's all he could say before the world turned dark.

4. Chapter Four: Tying Loose Ends

****Author's notes: ****So, more than a chapter, this is just a conversation between Chief Mendez and Colonel Urban Holland, if you've played Reach and read the Halo books, then you will probably remember Mendez.

****CHAPTER FOUR: TYING LOOSE ENDS****

****United Nations Space Command Priority Transmission
36249F-70****

****Encryption Code: **Red**

****Public Key: **file /excised access Omega/**

****From: **Senior Chief Petty Officer Franklin Mendez, SCPO,
XF-063**

****To: **Colonel Urban Holland, Commanding Officer of Special Warfare
Group Three, UNSC HighCom Armory Omega**

****Subject: **Sierra A055's and Sierra A298 transfer
files**

****Classification: **RESTRICTED**

_/_start file/_/_

Colonel Holland, as requested, here is Sierra Zero Fifty Five and Sierra Two Ninety Eight's transfer file, it is crucial that this operation is performed ASAP as Colonel Ackerson will without a doubt misuse his abilities as well as the abilities of other actives we are currently reviewing and will send to you soon. This particular pair has been screened and deemed like possible candidates for NavSpecWar Project SPARTAN-II and for that, they are too valuable to be wasted.

_Without any further delaying, here are the files in question; I hope that you will be able to transfer them out of our jurisdiction to avoid wasting their potential, for Colonel Ackerson will gladly send them to their deaths if they are to stay here, it's just a matter of

time and you and I both know it.:_

_/_open adjunct file #1/_

**JOSEPH**

**Petty Officer, First Class**

**FULL NAME: XXX, JOSEPH**

**SERVICE #: S-055**

_**UNIT: **__NAVSPECWAR/S-III/ALPHA_

_**(P)MOS: **__18X_

_**ENLISTMENT DATE: **__CLASSIFIED_

_**LOCATION: **__CLASSIFIED_

_**GENDER: **__M_

_**BIRTHPLACE: **__UTGARD, HARVEST_

_**BIRTH DATE: **__10/02/2520_

_**PERFORMANCE: **__S-055 is ratherâ€|adept at improvising, during Alpha Company's first deployment he lead a co-joint team past multiple hostile checkpoints after suggesting using the sewers as an alternative route. He is most adept in using the BR55 Battle Rifle and the MA5K._

_**COMMENTS: **__Rock-solid under pressure, he is the oldest recruit we have, just above S-269 and S-025 in age. Has developed some sort of bond with S-298, let's just hope that this doesn't lower their efficiency._

_**NOTE: **__He has moral qualms about fighting insurgents. Physical therapy is advised as S-055 was located in the close proximity of a M383C LSC Demolition Kit upon detonation. _

_/_file end/_

_/_open adjunct file #2/_

**ROXANNE**

**Petty Officer, Second Class**

**FULL NAME: XXX, ROXANNE**

**SERVICE #: S-298**

_**UNIT: **__NAVSPECWAR/S-III/ALPHA_

_**(P)MOS: **__18X_

_**ENLISTMENT DATE: **__CLASSIFIED_

_**LOCATION: **__CLASSIFIED_

__**GENDER: **__F__

__**BIRTHPLACE: **__DURBAN, BIKO__

__**BIRTH DATE: **__03/06/2521__

__**PERFORMANCE: **__Superb marksman, she is one of the best at her field of expertise although what she excels in sniping she lacks in respect, S-298 is not exactly the most respecting recruit I've trained, but she can put her money where her mouth is, that's for sure.__

__**COMMENTS: **__When I first saw S-298 I thought she would be part of the rejected batch, as we only had space for 300 recruits and we had 490, needless to say, most of them didn't make the cut. S-298 was not one of them though; she was one of the most dedicated during training. She's short tempered though and is easily infuriated so careful handling is required.__

__**NOTE: **__Both S-298 and S-239 seem to be overly aggressive when it comes to insurgents, the reasons for this are unknown but if we want the program to remain in secrecy I suggest avoiding deploying her in future counter-insurgent ops if possible.__

__Additional files will be sent in time, including more recruits would be suspicious, and Ackerson would probably relieve us of our obligations now that the Spartans are trained. We know that you will use them well Colonel, remember, the fate of the UNSC may be resting in the shoulders of this soldiers, let's not allow them to be misused.__

5. Chapter Five: Memories

**Author's notes: **So, here's another chapter that I've had stored up on my pc, this was kind of...fun to write, as I had to use a friend's character who is rather messed up in the head, you will see. cookies if you get the references in this chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE: MEMORIES

**1500 HOURS, DECEMBER 19, 2536 (MILITARY CALENDAR) \ERIDANUS SECTOR
\ MAMORE \ MATO GROSSO**

Pain that was the only thing he could feel at the moment, hot, searing pain. The only thing that he could remember was finding a captured trooper with a demolition kit strapped to his torso and then feeling his body being thrown away like a ragdoll. He tried to move, nothing happened. He wasn't dead though, no, he could still feel, besides, he doubted afterlife smelled like burnt metal and flesh.

He ceased his struggles to move through, his body ached too much, he wondered if his teammates were okay, some of them had been close to his position when the explosion had taken place, mainly Roxanne. He started to remember their first meeting, back in the first day of Alpha Companyâ€|

**2000 HOURS, DECEMBER 27, 2531 (MILITARY CALENDAR) \ ZETA DORADUS
SYSTEM, PLANET ONYX, CAMP CURRAHEE**

"Pfff, I am braver, you're just a silly girl after all!" A younger version of himself said, laughing at the somewhat taller girl, she didn't seem too amused though, as her freckled face showed no emotion besides seriousness and anger. "Ha! You? Braver than me? Don't make me laugh boy, I have more brave in my pinky finger than you in your whole body." She shot back, showing him her left pinky finger to put more emphasis in her words. "In fact, I am sure I can beat you without much trouble." She added, crossing her arms in front of her chest in defiance. He narrowed his eyes at her, not pleased by her words; he was a guy after all, no girls could beat him.

Sure, he had been somewhat afraid of the drop but he couldn't show weakness in front of all the other kids, who apart from being half his age also were competing with him for their spots in the Company, he had to be the very best if he wanted to succeed. Besides, this girl—Roxanne, she had been bugging him ever since they had boarded the Pelican, talking about how she was the best and how she would kill all of the aliens, he couldn't have any of that, he would be the best.

"I doubt that, why don't you go play with some dolls or something, leave this to the ones that will do something." He finished, pushing past her so he could head back to the arrival zone, he would become a Spartan, no matter what. Although apparently Roxanne wouldn't have any of that, his dolls comment having triggered her anger. "I will give you your dolls!" She shouted, hopping on his back to bring him down. "What the hell!" He wailed as they fell to the ground, turning around so he was laying on his back, that way he would be able to protect himself. "What the hell is wrong with you?" He exclaimed, placing his arms in front of his face to avoid her punches.

After some seconds, he was finally able to push her off of himself, throwing a jab at her gut, knocking the air out of her chest for a moment only to have her retaliate with a kick to his groin. "That—was—cheap—shot." He muttered as he fell to the floor, clutching his nether regions in pain, she was about to continue her assault when she was pulled away from a pair of drill instructors. "Stand down!" One of them ordered, lifting her off of the ground so he could drag her away while the other could check on the fallen boy. "This isn't over!" He half-shouted as he started to stand up, the pain starting to subside. He would get back at her; even if that was the last thing he would do—

**1530 HOURS, DECEMBER 19, 2536 (MILITARY CALENDAR) \ERIDANUS SECTOR
\ MAMORE \ MATO GROSSO**

His memories were interrupted however as the bag he had placed on his head was removed, a blinding light clouding his vision and suddenly he was back on Mato Grosso, the difference was that he was bound by both his arms and legs to a chair, normally it wouldn't be a problem snapping the ropes with his above human strength, but in his weakened state he was in a bad predicament. He waited for his eyes to adjust to the light, blinking repeatedly in an attempt to make the wait shorter although before his eyes could adapt he received a fist to the face. "Look like one of our prisoners woke up." He heard a man laugh; he couldn't see him at the moment, since his head had been turned to the side by the punch. "Looks like you UNSC dogs fell for our trap." He heard another one say, this time however he could see him. He estimated the man was in his mid-thirties, tall, well built,

perhaps ex-UNSC soldier, he sported a bald head and a scar at the side of his face, probably a burn. "We didn't come here for him; you have mistaken us for someone else." He explained, only to get a punch to the gut.

"Don't lie to me boy! Or I will cut off your tongue!" The insurgent in charge threatened, placing a knife next to Joseph's cheek, the Spartan however didn't blink, he wasn't afraid, no, his teammates would be there in any moment to rescue them. "Not going to speak? Fine, have it your way. Maybe the girl will." The man smiled wickedly, walking away from Joseph and towards a semiconscious Roxanne. "Hey, pretty girl. Since your friend over here won't talk, we will have to speak with you." He took a spare chair and sat down in front of her. "So, you UNSC bastards though we wouldn't fight back just because you send little kids eh? Well, guess what? Wrong!" He shouted, dropping the calm act. "Now tell me who's with you?" He demanded the information from her only to get spit in the face. "Just your mother!" She answered, getting a slap for her comment. She spit some mouth to the ground a moment later, half coughing, half laughing.

The man nodded to another one behind her whom placed a rope around her neck, pulling it to choke her. "Now, you better answer quickly, that way this will be over soon, or you can keep up this act and then have some fun with us after the interrogation." The man said, keeping his face inches away from hers. "Now, tell me pretty girl, who is your commander?" He said in a sweet tone, keeping a smile on his face. "Your hairdresser." She shot back, half coughing due to the pressure on her neck. "Really funny." He scowled, nodding to the man to apply more pressure, knocking her out due to lack of air. "Hey, scarface, mess with someone your own size!" Joseph shouted, trying hopelessly to escape captivity without avail.

He looked around the room, noticing the other Spartans whom were also unconscious, their helmets and weapons missing. There was one missing though, what if they didn't know that he was missing? They still had a chance to escape. "When I untie myself I'm going to kick your ass." He kept speaking trying to snap the ropes, although it wasn't enough and he was pushed to his side by the man, landing on his right shoulder and hitting his head when reaching the floor. "Come on guys, let's soften him up." He cheered up the other men inside the room, prompting them to start kicking the downed Spartan. This was however part of Joseph's plan, as they were now distracted. "Come on, is thatâ€¦all you've got?" He coughed a little blood as a foot found its destination against his jaw. By now, some of the Spartans were beginning to stir, moving limbs as they began to wake up, although they were still tied.

A smirk was plastered on his face as a black pipe rolled into the middle of the room. He closed his eyes instantly, feeling a loud ring through his ears. The one thing he was able to hear before the explosion was somebody yelling. "Considered yourselves fucked!...Ben, dammit.

6. Chapter Six: Confusion

****Author's notes: ****I actually don't have a lot to say about this chapter, have fun!

****CHAPTER SIX: CONFUSION****

****1535 HOURS, DECEMBER 19, 2536 (MILITARY CALENDAR) \ERIDANUS SECTOR
\ MAMORE \ MATO GROSSO****

"Hope you don't mind me crashing your party!" Ben screamed as he burst into the room, he had been afraid that the insurgents had found them and so, he had stayed behind at the elevators in hopes of avoiding detection, and while the rest of the team thought it was stupid, it was the reason he wasn't captured. So, while the other Spartans were recovering from both the trap laid by the insurgents and the flash-bangs, Ben was laying waste to the soldiers with his 45E.

He pulled the trigger, sending a man close to the door flying due to the impact of the pellets, before cocking the shotgun and firing again, hitting another in his leg, making him scream in agony as a good chunk of it was blown away. "Son of a bitch!" He wailed, clutching his leg as he fell to the floor, he tried to move it, however he was unable to. "I'ma kill you." He threatened, turning around on the floor to pick his discarded 'Confetti maker', although the Spartan didn't give him a chance. "Shut up." The boy said, flipping the weapon in his hands, bringing the butt of the shotgun against the man's face, leaving a caved-in skull left. The scarred man, shouted in anger, swinging his knife around wildly in hopes of catching their attacker, only to slash the throat of one of his men and to be shot in the gut by said man, as he went down, blood gushing everywhere from his cut. "Game over man, game over!" Another man shouted in panic, barely regaining his eyesight in time to see the Spartan casually walking to his position. "Who the fuck are you?" He cried in fear, letting his MA2 drop to the floor, he was too scared to shoot or to even hold his gun. "My name...is Bob!" His voice tone changed as he took a hold of the man's throat with his free hand, crushing his larynx like a twig.

The man dropped to the floor with a loud thud, leaving the Spartan as the only man...boy, standing in the room. By now most of the Spartans had regained their senses and were already standing up, stretching their sore limbs and picking up the weapons dropped by the rebels. "I cannot believe that this happened, but you actually saved us Ben." Joseph spoke, heading to where Roxanne was located; she was still unconscious, not good. "Wait, I did?" He asked, puzzled by the lack of memories of what had happened, apparently he had saved the rest of the team... "Oh look, a wrench!" He quipped, spotting a red wrench lying on the floor. He walked over to it and picked it up, holding it in his free hand. The rest of the Spartans just shared some glances among each other, silently wondering what was up with their teammate. "Yes, Ben, you did." Joseph spoke again from his crouching spot next to Roxanne whom was starting to regain consciousness as well. "Ugh, what's going on?" Roxanne grunted, gently rubbing her neck with one of her hands, coughing a bit as she did. "Ben saved us all." Joseph answered, helping her stand up. "Ben did what?" She asked, dumbstruck, it seemed like a dream, it had to be, Ben was too inept to properly rescue one, let alone the whole team. "Yeah, surprising, I cannot really believe it either." He replied to her unspoken doubts. She looked back and forth between all of the other Spartans who were by now ready to move before standing up as well. "Well, we should go now; we still got a leader to either capture or to kill." She said, grabbing the closest weapon she could get a hold of, an MA3A Assault Rifle.

Joseph nodded, standing up and picking up the MA5K and the pair of M7 that had been taken from him after the explosion, they seemed to be in good condition, hopefully the detonation didn't do any internal damage to the weapons, they wouldn't want the weapons to fail in the middle of a firefight after all. "Alright Spartans, time to move. The UNSC troopers will arrive soon and we don't want to be discovered. Jesse, if you still have some explosives, I need you to plant them all around the room, we're going to bring down this building, as for the rest, head to the elevators and try to contact Leo, tell him to hurry up with the evacuation plan." He issued orders, catching some of the spare C12 that Jesse threw at him. They had to leave no evidence of their involvement here, once they were done, it would look like the insurrection command decided to take all the data to the graves with them.

"Set the timer for fifteen minutes, that should give us enough time to reach the roof and to get the hell out of here." He told Jesse, the ordnance expert who silently complied, finishing the charges at his side of the room before setting the timer for fifteen minutes as instructed. Joseph did the same and pressed the startup button, prompting the clock to start ticking down. The two jogged to the end of the hallway where the rest of the team awaited their return next to the elevators. "Alright, we've got fifteen minutes before this place turns into gravel, have you contacted Team Two?" He asked Roxanne who simply shook her head. "They aren't responding, the rebels must have some jammers up there too." She replied, leaning against the elevator. "Dammit, looks like we will have to help them out." There was no option either way, Team Two had been tasked with securing the landing pad after all.

Joseph had to lean slightly against the wall for a moment, grasping his torso in pain as the adrenaline began to fade off of his system, it was only then that he really registered the pain that cursed through his body, he would need to keep it at the back of his mind though, or the mild burns and bruising flesh would affect his efficiency. "Are you okay?" He heard Ben asked worriedly, the kid might be crazy but he cared for the rest of the Spartans nonetheless, so why worry him? "I'm fineâ€¦it's nothing." He spoke through gritted teeth, punching the button that would take the elevator to the last floor. "Don't worry about me, focus on the mission." He ordered, closing his eyes as he felt the elevator lurch upwards towards their destination. I really hope we don't run out of timeâ€¦ He thought, teeth gritted as he opened his eyes and stared at the rest of the team.

They all had grown as a family during their time at Onyx; it was almost saddening to think of what could have happened to them if Ben had not opted to stay back. From now on he would need to be more careful if he was to lead a team, especially in situations like that. "Alright, let's get this mission done and head back home." It had been a long day and he was aching to just fall face first on his bunk, but a visit to the infirmary would need to happen first, little did he know that they were being observed through a concealed camera.

7. Chapter Seven: Discoveries

****Author's notes: ****Wanted to advance a couple of years into the

future, that's why the whole change of dates and stuff, don't worry though, we will be back at Mamore in a bit.

****CHAPTER SEVEN: DISCOVERIES****

****1500 HOURS, JUNE 09, 2547 (MILITARY CALENDAR) \ CHI CETI SYSTEM \ CHI CETI IV \ IN ORBIT ABOVE CHI CETI IV****

A lone Covenant Destroyer lingered above the long-abandoned human planet known as Chi Ceti IV. The UNSC had abandoned the colony at the beginning of the war after an attack from the Covenant to their installations just as they were outfitting the Spartan II candidates with the then new MJOLNIR Mark IV powered armor system. But that had been more than twenty years ago, now what was left of those facilities were riddled with decay and mistreatment.

That however didn't stop the Covenant from looking for anything that might make the cleansing of the unholy humans easier and faster. They would never use their technology or anything pertaining to them, no, but that didn't mean they couldn't gather information regarding their worlds locations and any holy artifacts that might lay dormant in them. Such task was the one handed to Phre 'Eojalee, a seasoned Sangheili Zealot stationed at the Fleet of Ardent Fervor whom was to find any human world and subsequently burn it down until there was nothing left but ashes and cinder. That wouldn't happen this day though, no, for the world below him was but an empty shell, devoid of any of the impure beings they currently fought. "Prepare a Phantom, we are going down." He ordered to one of his subordinates, his maroon armor shining in a dull fashion under the blue lights of the bridge, they would go explore the abandoned facilities that lay below them to find what mundane research the humans had done before leaving that world. Despite the knowledge that the planet had been abandoned for more than twenty years, something told the Zealot that what they were looking for was located down there.

****1600 HOURS, JUNE 09, 2547 (MILITARY CALENDAR) \ CHI CETI SYSTEM \ CHI CETI IV \ EN ROUTE TO CHI CETI IV****

The fabric of space was violently ripped open as the UNSC Prowler Phobos jumped out of Slipspace at the edge of the system, its ablative coating masking it from the Covenant Destroyer that still floated above Chi Ceti IV. While Covenant tech was miles ahead of the UNSC's level, they still couldn't detect a fully cloaked Prowler, if they were to look their way, they would be greeted by the dark void of space, a good thing, considering the disadvantage the Prowler possessed against the Destroyer in size, durability and firepower, if they were spotted they would be doomed. The bridge was quiet save for the clicks and beeps made by the computers as the crew kept any type of signal away from the ship, despite their camouflage they could still be detected by electronic means if they were not careful after all. The Captain of the ship, an aging man, probably around his late fifties stood in front of the observation deck with his hands crossed behind his back as he examined the lingering enemy vessel. "So they're already hereâ€¦" He mused to himself, a scold present on his face.

Captain Horace Bennett was not new to the threat that the Covenant presented, he had fought them in at least ten battles before, but he still didn't liked doing so and he had hoped that they would arrive before they did. "Captain. You wanted to see us?" He was snapped out

of his thoughts by a grave voice, prompting him to turn around on his heels only to see two figures towering above the rest of the crew. Spartans. "Indeed I did." He beckoned them with his hand so they would approach him before turning around again to return his gaze towards the Covenant ship. "Resent intelligence has informed us that the Covenant have been returning to our lost colonies, we are not sure why but we don't like it. Now, that over there is Chi Ceti IV, you may know it as the place where the MJOLNIR Armor Systems were manufactured." He informed them, not needing to see their faces to know that they understood what the mission would be. "Back in 2525, the planet was abandoned after it was attacked by the Covenant; unfortunately some assets were left down there. The Office of Naval Intelligence wants you to destroy or recover anything that might serve the enemy with information, and I mean anything." He explained, turning his head momentarily to the side to input some commands on the console besides him.

"You will be going down there through SOEIVs and will have Demeter to provide field data for you." The Spartans looked at each other nodding before Joseph spoke. "Understood sir, now, if you'll excuse us we need to get prepared." He spoke calmly, eyeing the vessel that was becoming bigger and bigger by the moment before leaving the bridge, Roxanne following him closely.

Once they were out of the deck and using the elevator Roxanne let herself speak. "SOEIVs eh? Sounds like fun!" She stated excitedly, she always saw humor in everything, not that he could blame her, they needed something to cope their pain after what happened at PROMETHEUS. Even though it had been almost ten years ever since it had happened he could still remember it as if it had been yesterday.

****2000 HOURS, AUGUST 02, 2537 (MILITARY CALENDAR) \ UNKNOWN SYSTEM \ K7-49 \ 47-49'S SURFACE****

"RETREAT, RETREAT!" One Spartan shouted as a squadron of Banshees flew overhead, performing strafing runs and shooting down whoever was unfortunate enough to be in their way. The Spartans present were being decimated, both by Banshees on the sky and by Elites on the ground and there was nowhere for them to go. Over the last seven days, the Spartans of Alpha Company had been able to destroy several Covenant factories at the asteroid's surface, something that would make the Covenant stop their efforts for some time while they built new ones on other systems.

They had destroyed enough factories to allow the asteroid to cool off, killing a response force gathered after they arrived. They had kept their enemies at bay for the next few days, but over the course of the last twenty four hours the enemy had gathered a force too big for them to handle. They were tired and they were outnumbered, bad odds for them. "Execute plan Delta, now!" Another shouted, prompting several shimmering figures to drop to one knee so they could fire their M19 Surface-to-Air missile launchers. The missiles connected with several Banshees but they were still not enough to completely deny the skies to the Covenant.

While they did so, other Spartans broke into a run towards the closest refineries, having lost their unit cohesion, right now they were but scared children. Most of the Spartans were hit by the remaining Banshees, some being vaporized by their bombs while others

were gunned down by Elites behind them. Some others stood defiant and fought back; killing several of their attackers before going down with them, such was the case of Joseph and Roxanne, whom were cornered against one of the refinery walls.

They could see their exfiltration craft but it was across a field full of enemies, something that posed a big problem. Their only defense was a pair of captured Jackal gauntlets, the shields being just big enough to cover their bodies behind them. "We need to get to that exfiltration ship!" He shouted while firing what was left of his last MA5K magazine, managing to kill an Elite Major with it while Roxanne covered him. Hearing the click that signaled the end of his bullets, he dropped the carbine, resorting to his side-arm to defend himself. "I say we just break for it!" Roxanne answered, shooting at a trio of Grunts that got too close for her liking, it was a crazy move, but they could do it with luck.

The only good thing about their current situation was that some Spartans remained to help them, about twenty still stood nearby, fighting the overwhelming Covenant forces, that gave them a chance and as much as he hated the idea of leaving his brothers and sisters, they had to go. "Alright, let's go. Now!" He ordered, pointing the shield to his back to absorb any incoming fire from behind before breaking into a sprint towards the hill which contained their hidden ship. He fired what was left of his magazines at any nearby hostiles, killing some grunts and a pair of Jackals as well as an Elite. He had to duck however as he passed by a Hunter, whom had nearly decapitated him in a fluid motion of his enormous shield.

He however didn't stop, no, there was no time for that, their survival would be determined on their speed now. Luckily they were not that far from the clearing, unluckily an Elite with a fuel rod gun had them on his sights. They hadn't noticed him, not until they were thrown to the sides by the splash damage caused by his gun, dropping them to the ground, their armor emanating a wall of steam as the plates began to melt. If only they had been given a better armor system, then maybe they wouldn't be in such a dire precaution. Joseph grasped at his chest plate, ripping it away from his torso before it could begin to burn him, Roxanne did as well with her right shoulder pad while they both attempted to stand up, only to be targeted by the Elite Ultra that was holding the Fuel Rod Gun

Well, it looked like this was the end, the Elite was about to finish them off with his gun when he was tackled at the last moment by none other than Kai, whom was now missing most of his armor as plasma had eaten up the plates. "Go! I will hold them off!" He shouted as they stood up, there was no use on escaping, he was already doomed. His torso sported a big hole, caused by the shrapnel from a needler, he would die regardless of what happened. The two dropped their weapons and their now melted jackal shields and practically threw themselves into the escape craft; punching the commands and making the ship leave the asteroid, barely avoiding the plasma bolts lurched by the remaining Banshees whom soon ignored the ship to finish off any survivors on the ground.

Kai clutched his stomach as the Elite dropped dead, a big hole on its forehead after Kai's magnum penetrated its helmet. He could feel his life slithering away from him by the moment, but for some reason he wasn't afraid, no, he just felt at peace, despite the burns and the missing chunk of flesh and bone on his torso. He knew he would

finally join his family and friends again, the ones whom had been taken from him so long ago, it made a tear streak down his cheek, he was going home. By now most of the other Spartans were dead or missing, he was the only one standing that he could see. "Well, looks like this is how the game ends." He half smiled, using his free hand to raise his side-arm. He had one bullet left, not much he could do, especially against the hunter that was quickly approaching him.

He stared into the creature for some moments, the rest of the Covenant forces were by now starting to surround him, watching in awe as he stood face to face with a mighty Megalekgolo without apparent fear. "Your time has come to perish, demon." One of the Elites said just before the Hunter hit Kai with its shield, sending him lurching a couple of meters away from his original spot "Yeah well, there's room for plenty of you in hell." He spat some blood, smiling as he used what was left of his energy to drop a primed plasma grenade to the floor. "Look around you, the place is riddled with thisâ€¦|this greâ€¦|grenades of yours." He coughed; trying to laugh at the situation, the explosion of the grenade would cause a chain reaction that would activate the rest, taking most if not all of the enemies out as well as him. "So, consider this your Great Journey." That was the last thing he said before the explosion engulfed them all.

2100 HOURS, JUNE 09, 2547 (MILITARY CALENDAR) \ CHI CETI SYSTEM \ CHI CETI IV \ ABOVE CHI CETI IV

By now, the Prowler had arrived to the planet, having opted to go as close as possible to the surface to make the possibilities of detection slimmer, it also helped that the Destroyer now was hovering some kilometers above ground rather than on orbit, although that also meant that the Covenant was going to use their gravity lifts to move something valuable. "Alright Spartans, prepare to drop." An ODSI announced, walking up to them with a M392 DMR in one hand and a SRS99 on the other. He gave the DMR to Joseph while giving the Sniper Rifle to Roxanne before he grabbed a pair of M7S's for himself. The two nodded and headed to their respective pods, storing their weapons in the appropriate places before hopping inside. "This is Echo One, do you copy?" He spoke through the team channel to see if the rest of the troopers could hear him. His HUD was lit by seven green lights answering his question. "Alright, set your drop coordinates to the outskirts of the Damascus Testing Facility, we will drop outside and sneak inside." The others simply flashed their acknowledge lights and began to input the coordinates on their consoles.

The drop pods closed on their owners like coffins before being moved one at a time to the dropping bay by cranes. Joseph inhaled deeply as his pod was left dangling above the abyss that was space, he wasn't used to the drops that the ODSI troopers were famous for, no, he usually just went down on a Pelican or Albatross, but orders were orders. "Relax you big wuss." He heard Roxanne's voice on a private channel, always there to lighten the mood. "Says the one afraid of underwater opsâ€¦| " He retorted, shaking his head before speaking on the team channel. "Demeter, did you double check the coordinates?" He asked the AI that would be helping the team during the operation; he had worked with this particular construct in the past and was more than glad when the Captain had told them she would be "tagging along" in a matter of speaking.

"Yes, Echo One, I've ran through all the simulations and the odds of

things going wrong areâ€| one point five in twenty." Her words didn't make him any less worried though, he knew that even possibilities that low could still happen. "Understood, Demeter, begin countdown." He answered, flipping switches on his pod as the A.I. acknowledged him. "Aye Echo One, initiating countdown, would you like me to apply some analgesics to help you relax during the drop?" The AI quirked, ready to apply a dose of morphine to soothe the Spartan, high stress levels were a common factor in ODST drops, or so she understood. The figure of a petite, robe-donning woman appeared at his side, arms crossed over her chest as he frowned. "Don't give me that look; you know that I hate dropping." He spoke to her, knowing the look of disapproval she often gave him when things didn't go her way.

"I was just trying to help, fifty five." She huffed, turning her hologram from him. He just shook his head and sighed. "Just begin the countdown." He ordered, leaning his head against the hard metal of the pod, she wasn't making this any easier for him. "Are you done chatting with your girlfriend?" He listened to Roxanne speak through the private channel. He simply shook his head and closed the channel, flipping the final switch that would release the pods. "Dropping in 3...2â€|1â€|Pods away." Demeter spoke calmly through the COMM Channel, releasing the pods into the abyss.

8. Chapter Eight: Confrontations

****CHAPTER EIGHT: CONFRONTATIONS****

****FOURTEENTH CYCLE, 49 UNITS (COVENANT BATTLE CALENDAR) \ CHI CETI SYSTEM \ CHI CETI IV \ DAMASCUS TESTING FACILITY****

* * *

><p>The trip down to the surface of the human planet known as Chi Ceti IV was fast and without complications, with Phre' Eojalee, shipmaster of the Valorous Penance riding a Phantom dropship with a squad of Special Operations Sangheili and Unggoy. He knew that the planet below was abandoned but it never hurt to be prepared, for he also knew that the humans were deceptive and that they had surely left traps before leaving their installations. He had faced the scoundrels before in combat, individually they were frail and without strength, but like the vermin they were, the humans never acted alone, they attacked as a swarm and when they did so, they could be a danger.<p>

He looked around the dimly illuminated interior of the Phantom, noticing some Unggoy chatting among their circle; they told the exaggerated tales of the Demons that riddled the human lines. He had heard most of the tales and knew from personal experience that they were mostly lies, for he had vanished one of the Demons back to hell during their first campaign against the Humans in the world they called Harvest. He didn't pay heed to their frantic chattering though for he knew that they were possessors of an inferior intelligence, bred only to wage war, not to think. His head turned next to a pair of Sangheili standing to his left, arms crossed as they recited the writ of union silently, something that was required by the Minister of Discovery for all the occupants onboard the Valorous Penance to do lest they be judged with heresy.

Heresyâ€|It was a word that put a lot of thoughts in the Sangheili's

mind; he knew that the humans, while vermin still had the ability to do valiant things. He had seen wounded humans throw themselves at their forces to gain time for their comrades. So, why were they not allowed into the Covenant? They would make for a better working race than the Unggoy, and they certainly seemed to be nobler than the feral Jiralhanae. Such questions often made the Zealot ponder a lot, although he knew that such thing was heresy, something that would stay his feet should the Great Journey come. "Shipmaster, what troubles your thoughts?" He knew who the voice belonged to even before looking up. Tewa 'Takulee had been his friend for many years now and had always been at his side no matter the situation, he was essentially his right-hand, despite the rank differences. "Just thinking about the war, Tewa."

The Zealot raised his gaze to meet the one of his comrade, their eyes locking for some moments before he walked past the black-armored Elite to stand near the gravity lift. Moments later the dropship came to a halt, opening its side platforms and activating the gravity lift as it hovered four meters above the ground. The Unggoy and most of the Sangheili opted to jump down through the sides of the ship, while Phre took the middle route, going down through the lift and landing without effort on the rocky ground below.

Sometimes Phre wished that his armor wouldn't be as ornate as it was, as he realized how much he stuck out on the surrounding environment with his maroon armor. "Alright Brothers, split up and search for any humans. Pilot, go back to the Valorous Penance, I shall hail you when we are done here." He ordered, retrieving a Plasma Rifle from one of his thigh plates. The Spec Op troopers had already activated their camouflage modules and were searching for any opening in the human facilities that lay before them.

"Shipmaster, I recommend setting up a camp before we proceed any further, night is approaching and our readings indicate that a storm is forming nearby." One of the Unggoy spoke to Phre with a submissive tone, not wanting to question his decisions. "Very well, tell the others to regroup and to start setting up a perimeter, we shall prepare a camp before the storm can hit us." The Zealot nodded, placing his hand on a nearby wall panel. The humans had yet to master holographic technology and instead relied on crude buttons and screens. He felt disgusted by the mere touch of human technology, but he had been tasked by the Minister of Discovery to retrieve as much data as he could, so he would need to cast aside his personal dislike for the task, the knowledge that this would surely win him his place in the Great Journey being more than enough consolation. Their most noble duty would however need to wait since the storm would make gaining entrance to the base an even more difficult job, nonetheless they would prevail and leave the damned rock before long.

FOURTEENTH CYCLE, 190 UNITS (COVENANT BATTLE CALENDAR) \ CHI CETI SYSTEM \ CHI CETI IV \ DAMASCUS TESTING FACILITY

* * *

><p>The unggoy sat near each other as lightning struck the ground next to their tent, making one of them jump in surprise while the Sangheili quietly waited for the inclement weather to pass. They were not scared of a mere storm, no, they were the holy warriors of the sacred Covenant after all, trained from birth to be warriors, to kill

or be killed, to survive. That was the life on Sanghelios, only the strong survived; it was a rather grim reality but it ensured that their society thrived, with the weaklings being cast aside.<p>

Phre remembered his childhood quite well because of this. He was not the best sangheili to bear the clan name Eojalee, no, he had almost been discarded as a child due to his frailness. It was but his mother's love that prevented this from happening, of course that it wasn't enough to spare him from years of grueling training and combat but he would never consider having it any other way.

His thoughts were interrupted by another Elite stepping inside his tent, bowing slightly before speaking. "Shipmaster, we've managed to find an opening to the human structure." The Special Operations Elite announced, waiting for a signal from his shipmaster before he could leave the tent. "Good, good. Tell the rest to get ready." The zealot spoke, clasping his hands behind his back as he walked past his subordinate. Phre headed straight towards the entrance which lay no farther than fifty meters away from their camp. He was about to reach the opening when a loud bang was heard, followed by a white trail as a bullet sped past his head, mere inches away from his face. Phre immediately rolled to the side, watching from the corner of his eye as one of his troopers struggled with one of those human troopers, Oh dee es tees the humans called them, or something like that. They were supposed to be better than their brethren, but they were still no match for a Sangheili, even less if said Sangheili was a Special Operations member.

His trooper was about to kill the human when a bulky figure impacted against him, tackling him to the ground. "Demons!" He snarled in anger, watching as a second figure appeared, helping the first one finish his brother. "Everybody get inside, seal the entrance behind you!" He ordered the other Elites who by now were more than aware of the threat, while the Unggoy began to run towards the entrance, a couple being killed by the Spartans' fire before they made it inside. Once they were inside they closed the thick, metallic doors and broke the console, ensuring that they would not be followed. "They've got Fal!" One of the Elites bellowed, causing more anger to the Zealot, he would be avenged. "Worry not for him brothers, for it is too late to help him." He replied to their men before he looked around, the room they were in looked like a lobby, incredibly luxurious for a scientific outpost or at least it was for human standards.

"You two stay here. The rest of you, follow me." The Zealot ordered, leaving behind a pair of his brothers while the rest of the group approached the closest doors which lay at the other end of the room; it was time to uncover the secrets that the installation held.

9. Chapter Nine: First Blood

****CHAPTER NINE: FIRST BLOOD****

****2105 HOURS, JUNE 09, 2547 (MILITARY CALENDAR) \ CHI CETI SYSTEM \ CHI CETI IV \ IN ORBIT ABOVE CHI CETI IV****

The otherwise peaceful state of space was disturbed by the eight pods that rapidly began to descend towards the planet of Chi Ceti IV in a straight formation, maneuvering slightly to adjust their trajectories as their coordinates were updated for an optimal landing. Joseph, at

the front of the formation could partially see the Covenant destroyer some thousand kilometers away from them, floating in space like a shark would in the ocean, just looking for its next meal. "Alright, we will make use of the storm going on to mask our entry, with some luck the Covenant already stationed there won't be able to pick us up on their sensors." Even he could not believe what he was saying; the chances of them passing by unnoticed were one in a million and even then, they would be stuck down there until the Destroyer left or was destroyed, the last option wasn't that likely though.

The blood on his face slowly drained as the pod began to experience some turbulence while it broke through the atmosphere, prompting him to swallow in fear. "fifty five, your vital signs are flaring, what's the matter?" He listened to Demeter on the back of his head, always the curious one. "Not..nothing, I just don't like dropping, that's all. Makes me feel like a fish in a barrel." He said briefly, closing his eyes for a moment as the turbulence started to fade, when would the UNSC invent something safer to deploy their troops secretly? He opened his eyes once again as the pod began to heat up, making sweat tickle down his forehead and into his eyes, making them sting. He kept himself silent though, why disturb his teammates over something as trivial as a sting in his eyes due to sweat? Besides, Spartans didn't complain, no.

"Alright, get ready to deploy the parachutes in five." He ordered, flipping down some switches and pressing some buttons to stabilize the pod and start the slowdown process, deploying the parachute as well as activating the thrusters to decrease the speed of the pod, otherwise he'd probably end up as goo against some rock or tree. His stomach lurched as the metal pod finally slowed down enough for a safe landing, which was more of him crashing against a tree, bringing it down and having his pod bounce a couple of meters until it came to a rest at the shore of a small lake like a pinball than a conventional landing. He shook his head after the landing, seeing stars over his eyes, he had hit his head while the pod was bouncing around, opening a huge gash on his forehead. "I'll never get used to this." He muttered, looking around himself, noticing the blood staining his visor as well as the cracked windshield in front of him. "Guess I hit it harder than I thought." He commented, pressing the ejection button of the pod, only to realize it did not work.

Sighing, he unbuckled his harness and folded his legs, extending them in a violent motion in front of him, opting to kick the door open. After two tries he felt the metal buckle under the pressure until he shot his legs forward one last time, sending the piece of metal flying into the air before it disappeared from sight due to the storm. "This is Echo One, come in team." He spoke through the TEAM COMM, stepping out of his pod with some difficulty, not being able to see past three meters due to the heavy sandstorm.

"Echâ€|neâ€|is..twoâ€|" Static, the storm was not going to help them as much as they wished, apparently. The good part though was that he still had a faint waypoint over the location of their pods. "This is going to take a whileâ€|" He sighed, ignoring the ache on his forehead and the trickling blood that was going down his face. "fifty five you are bleeding, I recommend getting medical assistance soon." Demeter suggested with a somewhat worried tone, or at least the closest thing to a worried tone an AI could possess.

"That can wait; we need to get this mission done." He replied, moving

to the side of his pod to retrieve his weapons, a DMR and a pair of M6G's that were safely kept inside the drop pod's frame. At least they were unscathed; it wouldn't do him any good if his weapons jammed on him or something. Once his weapons were placed on his back and thigh plates, he set off to find the rest of his missing squad, barely able to see anything due to the raging storm.

His Heads Up Display showed that the closest pod was just a little more than a couple hundred meters away, it should take him about three minutes to reach that destination, maybe more if he ran into any Covenant patrols. "This is Echo One; I am on my way to your position Echo Three." He wasn't even sure that they could hear him, but it was better to inform his teammates nonetheless, to at least try to avoid friendly fire.

2110 HOURS, JUNE 09, 2547 (MILITARY CALENDAR) \ CHI CETI SYSTEM \ CHI CETI IV \ OUTSKIRTS OF DAMASCUS TESTING FACILITY

"Damn." Roxanne muttered to herself as her pod finally stopped after what seemed like forever. The Spartan wasn't particularly fond of drops but she could still tolerate them, she knew however that this was not the case with her team leader and friend, Joseph. Despite that, the thought of a battle-hardened super soldier feeling nervous for doing the space equivalent of a parachute drop was pretty hilarious to her. Fortunately for her, the drop had not been as bad as the aforementioned Spartan's with the worse of it being how many times the pod bounced around along with the splattering of an innocent critter or what used to be a critter.

The Spartan pulled on the ejection lever of the pod, making its door open up with a creak and allowing her to finally be free from its confines. Roxanne looked around, or at least tried to despite the sandstorm that was currently blocking her vision past two meters. It was also messing with her COMM systems, with blurred out messages coming in, some coming from Joseph, others from the ODS'Ts in their team and others from Covenant Grunts who were not careful enough to speak in a private channel. She took a hold of her pod's metal frame and with a grunt of effort, was able to flip it on its side to recover her weapons from it. Luckily for her, the M6C was in pristine condition, the same couldn't be said for her SRS99-AM though, the sniper had somehow gotten damaged and now the end of the barrel was bent at an unnatural angle. Even if she did fix the barrel, it would probably not be reliable enough to be used. "Echo Two here. I'm a couple hundred meters away from the objective." She talked into the COMM, hoping for her teammates to get the message.

Moving away from her pod, she took a couple steps forward, barely pausing in time as the ground beneath her feet turned into nothing, apparently she had dropped next to a cliff and had just missed the edge by a couple of inches. "Whoa!" She half-yelled, leaning back to avoid falling off, good thing she had a good reaction time, otherwise she would have taken quite the fall. Turning around, she cursed as the voice of one of the ODS'T troopers cracked through her COMMS. "I am almost in position; I can see the Covenant camp from here, going to try and take out their unit leader." Of course, he had to take the shot, god forbid if a Spartan was better than him. "Shit..." She muttered before she ran to the source of the signal; that ODS'T was going to ruin everything.

**2115 HOURS, JUNE 09, 2547 (MILITARY CALENDAR) \ CHI CETI SYSTEM \

CHI CETI IV \ OUTSKIRTS OF DAMASCUS TESTING FACILITY**

"Time to take this shot, oh yeah!" Private Marcus Flint spoke as he laid flat on top of the cliff overlooking the Covenant camp. By now the storm was weakening and Marcus could actually see the Covenant camp, lining up his own sniper rifle he began to observe the aliens, trying to find any sort of commander or leader among the crowd. "Gruntâ€|Gruntâ€|Wait a minute, you look important." He spoke to himself as he sighted what seemed to be a Zealot, according to his maroon armor, how could he tell? Well at sniper school they taught you that the more ornamental the armor, the higher ranking the Elite was; and this guy's armor was ornamental as fuck. "I'm in position; I can see the Covenant camp from here, going to try and take out the unit leaderâ€|" He informed over the COMM system to his teammates, he hoped that they would arrive soon otherwise he'd have to deal with a lot of angry Covies on his own. "A'ight, taking my shot in threeâ€|twoâ€|on-oh fuck!" He shouted, momentarily distracted by the sound of an energy sword being activated and an Elite materializing right beside him which prompted him to miss his shot and move out of the way lest he be bisected by the alien's energy sword.

Well, it looked like he was done, hasta la vista baby no more luck for good ol' Marcus; god, he should have screwed that girl at engineering before the mission, now he was going to die and without as much as a goodbye sexcapadeâ€| This war sucked. "Time to die, human filth." The dark Elite snarled, raising his sword to deliver the killing blow only to be stopped by an armored figure who tackled him to the ground. Marcus wasn't sure which of the two Spartans it was but he didn't care, he just cared that his ass was safe for the time being. "About damn time you arrived!" He shouted, getting to his feet just in time to see the second Spartan arrive to help his comrade in taking down the Elite, who by now was futilely trying to recover his dropped weapon. "Oh I don't think so!" Marcus heard one of the Spartans say before she kneed the alien on the ribcage, making him spit out blood while the other Spartan took a hold of his neck, effortlessly twisting it at an uneven angle; in a matter of seconds the Elite's life was over. "Next time wait for your orders!" He heard her say while she killed some of the Grunts that were trying to make their way to the facility with her pistol, piercing their methane tanks with superb precision, she even managed to hit one of the Elites although the rounds harmlessly bounced off of his shields and before she could hit him again he had disappeared into the building. "Damn!" She cursed, turning back to her teammates as the doors of the facility closed. "Whoa, that was fucking close!" Marcus exclaimed, taking off his helmet to brush aside some of the sweat on his forehead, another moment and he would have been Grunt food. By now some of the other ODSTS were arriving to their location, two to be exact. "Where's the rest of the team?" Joseph asked Sergeant McIntyre and Corporal Juarez, although by their lack of response he could already tell what had happened. "Understoodâ€|" They had been victims of a bad landing, the worst death any ODST could experience. "This better be worth it Spartan, I just lost three good men because of this mission and I'll be damned if their deaths were for nothing." He shared the man's pain, he too had lost many good men and women for the sake of a mission, he had almost lost everything when PROMETHEUS happened and it pained him whenever something similar happened, but this was their duty and they had to fulfill it. "We'll make sure that they didn't die in vain. Now, we need to get down there and find another entrance because I doubt we will be able to simply walk through the front door." There was bound to be an alternate way to

get inside, there was always a backdoor; it was just a matter of finding it.

End
file.